How to Build a Tobacco-Free Workplace
An Employer's Toolkit

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Executive Summary

Every business throughout the Commonwealth, large and small businesses alike, is trying to find ways to make their companies more productive. Health insurance costs impact the revenue of all companies in Massachusetts. The healthier your staff and workplace environment, the healthier your profits. Since tobacco use is the number one preventable health issue in the U.S., companies who encourage workers to quit, have an opportunity to help them get healthier, decrease health insurance costs and increase productivity.

Some companies and organizations are going beyond the Massachusetts Tobacco-Free Law by extending their tobacco-free policy to include outside property, parking lots and even cars. They are creating 100% tobacco-free initiatives that are supported by a comprehensive program of cessation benefits. These policies have the potential of decreasing health insurance costs while increasing not only the health and productivity of those who quit, but can also encourage a healthy lifestyle among all workers.

This is a step-by-step guide outlining the 3 key components needed to help your company move toward a tobacco-free environment: (1.) evaluation and utilization of Health Plan cessation benefits, (2.) establishment of a clear policy, (3.) creation and implementation of support programs. You will find the tools, information and resources that you need, for assessment of your current situation, policy development and the execution of a complete cessation plan. Tips on how to review and compare health insurance benefits like counseling and medications for tobacco treatment are included. Cost-effective support program ideas for large and small companies are highlighted. To measure the success of your initiative, short-term and long-term assessment approaches are provided.

The UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial Medical Center Case Study shows how a large healthcare organization developed and put into practice their 100% tobacco-free policy. It is a candid view of the process inside a large organization that serves a complex group of employees, patients, students and visitors. It can help employers understand the challenges and benefits of offering comprehensive, integrated cessation services to establish a tobacco-free workplace.

Building Your Business' Case for Going Tobacco Free

Tobacco dependence is our nation's #1 preventable health problem. One reason it is such a difficult problem to solve is that smoking is not a habit; it's a chronic

disease with periods of relapse which require repeated intervention. Many people in your workplace who currently smoke or use other tobacco products have probably tried to quit many times. To be successful they need a supportive environment both at work and at home.

When employees smoke, it is costly, not just to their health, but to your company. It impacts the bottom line of every workplace in the Commonwealth… both large and small.

If you have been thinking about helping your employees quit smoking, this guide explains how to estimate the cost of your current expenses for employees who smoke and how to implement a cost-effective, integrated plan to help them quit. In a tobacco-free work environment, everybody benefits…those trying to quit, non-smokers and your company.

What does it cost you to have smokers in your workforce?

There are two types of employer costs to consider that are caused by tobacco use in the workplace.

- **Direct Costs** are those dollars spent on health services. Direct costs include payments made by the company for healthcare benefits, disability and workers' compensation.
- **Indirect Costs** are expenses not immediately related to treatment of disease. They include lost wages, lost workdays, costs related to using replacement workers, overtime expenditures, productivity losses related to absenteeism and productivity losses of workers on the job.

These direct and indirect costs not only increase your healthcare costs for workers that smoke but for non-smoking workers as well.

Workplace Costs of Tobacco Use	
Employer Direct Costs	**Employer Indirect Costs**
Greater health insurance costs and claims. **Greater life insurance premium costs and increased claims.** **Greater disability costs.** **Greater worker's compensation payments and**	- Recruitment and retraining costs resulting from loss of employees to tobacco-related death and disability. - Lost productivity. - Greater amount of work time used on tobacco-use habits and routines. - Greater number of disciplinary actions. - Property damage (plus related insurance costs). Even smoking outside the building on company grounds could raise insurance rates and cause

| occupational health awards. | external smoke damage. |

Why are healthcare premiums increasing and profits going up in smoke?

Tobacco dependence is a difficult condition. The costs of tobacco use can be felt throughout your company from health to productivity.

Some Real Costs of Smoking:

- The CDC reports that smokers cost employers about $3,400 per year in direct medical costs and lost productivity.[1]
- A national study based on American Productivity Audit data of the U.S. workforce found that tobacco use was one of the greatest causes of lost worker production time (LPT) — greater than alcohol consumption, family emergencies, age, or education.[2]
- Smokers on average have about twice as many absences (6.16 days for smokers, 3.86 days per year for non-smokers) often due to smoking-related illnesses. This leads to more medical expenses and decreased productivity and morale.[3]
- Employees who take four 10-minute smoking breaks a day actually work one month less per year than workers who don't take smoking breaks.
- On average, tobacco users cost drug plans two times as much as non-tobacco users.[4]
- Since smokers have higher death rates than nonsmokers, some insurance companies offer discounts on premiums for term life insurance coverage for non-smokers. The more workers that smoke the fewer discounts.
- Smokers can cost you additional money per year for smoking-related accidents and injury, due to increased workers' compensation costs. (Approximately $2,189. for smokers and $176. for non-smokers)[5]

What's the best way to help your employees quit smoking?

The foundation of the most effective cessation plans in the workplace is built on 3 components including: health benefits, workplace policies and support programs. Integrating these strategies and offering employees continuous support helps them to quit and stay quit.

How do you get started?

Start where you are.

First, quantify your current costs for employees who smoke.
To find out how much an employee's tobacco use costs your company each year, you need to ask a few questions and do some math. We have provided a survey, examples of worksheets and an ROI (Return on Investment) Calculator to help make this process easier.

Here are the questions you need to ask:

- ***How many of your employees currently smoke?*** You can determine this through a survey or focus groups. You can also find out about the level of interest in quitting and what your employees know about current health plan benefits.
- ***How much is tobacco use costing your company each year?*** Once you know the number of employees that smoke, you can use the worksheet or enter the information into the ROI Calculator and determine your company's direct and indirect costs related to tobacco use.
- ***How much would a tobacco cessation benefit cost you?*** Use the worksheet that is provided or enter the required information into the ROI Calculator to help you calculate the approximate cost for you to offer a comprehensive tobacco cessation benefit that covers medicine and counseling.

(Link to ROI Calculator and worksheets: http://www.businesscaseroi.org/roi/default.aspx)

STEP 1: Employee Survey (sample)

1) Do you currently use tobacco?
   - YES
   - NO
2) If so, do you want to quit?
   - YES
   - NO
3) When do you want to quit?
   - Now
   - Next Month
   - 2-6 Months
   - 6-12 Months
   - Not Sure
4) Which of the following methods would you consider using to help you quit?
   - Doctor Visit
   - Counseling
   - Medication
   - Support Group
   - Classes
   - Telephone Helpline
   - None
   - Other _____

5) What is your health insurance/plan? _____

6) Does your plan provide help to quit smoking?
   - YES
   - NO
   - Don't Know

7) If so, what do you think your plan provides?
   - Doctor Visit
   - Counseling
   - Medication
   - Support Group
   - Classes
   - Nothing
   - Other _____

8) Where would you be most likely to get information on tobacco-cessation benefits?
   - Self-Help Materials
   - Posters
   - HR
   - Intranet
   - Company Meetings
   - Mailed Home
   - Other _____

9) What information would help you? _____

10) What can this company do to help you quit? _____

Step 2: Do the Math:
What are your tobacco-related costs?

_____   x   _____   =   _____
Total # of Employees   MA Adult Smoking Rate*   Number of Smokers

_____   x   _____   =   _____
Number of Smokers   Estimated Health Costs   Total Health Care Costs

_____   x   _____   =   _____
Number of Smokers   Lost Productivity Costs   Total Lost Productivity Costs

Your Total Cost Per Smoker:

| _____ | + | _____ | = | _____ |

Total Health Care   Total Lost Productivity   Total Cost per Smoker

Courtesy of Make it Your Business: Strategies for a Tobacco-Free Workplace in Wisconsin
*MA Adult Smoking Rate http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/tobacco-control/adults-who-smoke.pdf

STEP 3: Do the Math:
How much would a tobacco cessation benefit cost you?

Number of Employees: _____

33* Cents per Month: _____

Total Cost per Year: _____

* cost of medication and/or phone counseling varies with health insurance contract, assuming no co-pay and 5% employee benefit use

Healthy benefits for your employees. Healthy savings on your Health Plan.
Research shows that paying for tobacco cessation treatments through your plan is the most cost-effective health insurance benefit you can provide for your employees.[6][7][8]

Offering full cessation benefits:

- Is **Cost-Saving** or **Cost-Neutral**, as you are likely to break even in 3 years and save money in 5 years. [9][10]
- Costs between 10 and 40 cents per member per month depending on utilization and dependent coverage[11][12]
- Is more cost effective than other commonly covered disease prevention interventions such as high blood pressure. [13][14]
- Increases the use of effective treatments and increases successful quit attempts. [15]

Next: Review and evaluate what you have in place.
- Look at your company's health plan and assess the tobacco cessation benefits.

- Evaluate your company's tobacco-free policies and support their enforcement.

- Review any smoking cessation programs you may offer your employees.

Now you're ready to begin the process of expanding, revising and implementing the 3 essential components of an integrated smoking cessation plan at your company: **Health Plan, Smoking Policies and Support Programs.**

Developing A Comprehensive Tobacco-Free Policy And Support Programs

Component #1
How to Use Your Employer Health Plan to Help Employees and Families Quit Smoking.

Your choice of health plan coverage for smokers can determine how successful your employees or their dependents will be at quitting. Covering tobacco-use cessation treatments, including medications and counseling, encourage smokers to use the treatments. The result: more successful quit attempts and more savings for employers.

Calculating the total tobacco-related reimbursements you now receive is the first step in understanding your costs. Then you can compare that amount with the potential savings you could realize by offering more comprehensive cessation benefits through expanded heath plan coverage.

Remember, providing *full tobacco cessation benefits* through your health insurance, enforcing tobacco-free policies and offering workplace cessation programs is the most effective plan for decreasing employee tobacco use. [16]

10 Wise Shopper Questions to ask Health Plans:
1) How does the health plan identify and document tobacco users and tobacco cessation interventions?
2) List covered tobacco cessation drugs. How frequently are these offered, and for what period annually? Are multiple combinations of medications covered? Are multiple quit attempts covered in one 12-month period?
3) What type of counseling (in person, online, telephone) is covered, how often is counseling covered annually, and for what period (90 days twice per year)?
4) Describe the plan design for tobacco cessation (co-pay, etc.). Is co-pay in line with other medications?
5) Are over-the-counter medications, such as nicotine patches and gum, covered? Is there a copay?
6) Who is eligible for tobacco cessation benefits/drugs/counseling? Does this include all covered individuals or only those with a drug benefit?
7) What other educational or counseling materials are provided (hard copy, online, other)?
8) How does the plan motivate healthcare providers to provide tobacco cessation counseling (i.e. withholds, bonuses)?
9) Is the benefit promoted to the employees? How?
10) How is the percentage of tobacco users who have received treatment assessed? How is the success of the tobacco cessation initiatives evaluated? [17]

Time to examine your Health Plan Options.

Now you know your costs and your choices. What's the next step?

You can:

- Purchase a buy up, to include cessation benefits
- Request full cessation benefits
- Spend time checking out other plans and what they offer
- Continue with your current Health Plan

How do you determine what will be covered?

Whether you decide to stay with your current plan or get a new one, negotiate benefits that deliver cost-effective results.

According to the Public Health Service-sponsored Clinical Practice Guideline: *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence*, and Community Preventive Services Task Force, tobacco cessation benefits that have been found to be most effective include:

- Coverage of counseling and medication for at least 2 quit attempts per year
- Offering FDA-approved prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications
- Coverage of counseling services including proactive telephone counseling and individual counseling
- Elimination or reduction of co-pays and deductibles [18]

Most Commonly Covered Cessation Medications

Type	Form	Common Brand Names
Prescription	Pill	**Zyban®, Wellbutrin® (bupropion SR)**
	Pill	**Chantix® (varenicline)**
Prescription nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)	Inhaler	**Nicotrol®**
	Nasal Spray	**Nicotrol®**
Over the counter NRT	Gum	**Nicorette®**
	Patch (can be prescription)	**Nicoderm®, Habitrol®, Prostep®, Nicotrol®**
	Lozenge	**COMMIT®**

How can you make your Heath Plan cessation benefits even more effective?

Utilize your employer EAP.

If you have an Employee Assistance Program as part of your employee benefits plan, link this program to other cessation efforts offered through your Health Plan, or partner with your EAP as a cessation resource. Let employees know that EAP counselors are there for them to help them with the stress and problems that surround quitting. Your EAP is another resource that can support each employee and help him or her quit and become healthier and more productive in the workplace.

Component #2
How Policies Help Make Your Company Tobacco-Free

As of 2004 Massachusetts law requires that all enclosed workplaces with one or more employees be smoke-free. But your responsibility to maintain a smoke-free work environment doesn't end there. Cities and towns may also have local secondhand smoke laws and ordinances that may be stricter than the state law.

To review an Executive Summary of the Massachusetts Smoke-Free Workplace law go to: http://www.mass.gov/dph/mtcp.

Here are the steps your company can take to move beyond a smoke-free workplace to establishing a tobacco-free workforce:

Step 1: Review the tobacco-free policies that you have in place. Make sure they are in compliance with both Massachusetts state law and local laws. Outline current policies and practices including where employees and visitors are allowed to smoke (if any), like just outside the door, the parking lot, in vehicles or in designated areas on your campus.

Step 2: Define your company's approach to becoming tobacco-free. How will encouraging your workforce to go tobacco-free fit with your corporate or organizational culture? This part of the process is often the responsibility of mid and upper level management.

Step 3: Develop your goals and objectives for your tobacco-free policies. These could include improving the health of employees that smoke, cost-savings on healthcare premiums and other insurance policies and increased productivity.

Step 4: Establish a committee or workgroup made up of members from various departments throughout the company including representatives from Human Resources, Employee Benefits, Facilities and Operations, Health and Safety, Corporate Medical, Training and Communications. Include smokers, non-smokers and former smokers. The information they gather and their input will give decision makers a clear view of workers' perceptions of the current policies as well as any concerns they may have about new tobacco-free policies.

Step 5: Draft your company's tobacco-free policies with a timeline for implementation.

Every company is different. Think about a timeline that makes sense for *your* corporate culture. Take into consideration that preparing your company for policy change is usually an educational process, building an awareness and understanding of the change. But encouraging your workforce to go tobacco-free is more than that. You will be asking employees to not just change their behavior, but to manage long term habits and physical addiction.

Allow about 4 months to lay the groundwork for the implementation; consider longer if you are a large company. To maximize motivation, plan to implement

the policy in conjunction with national events like the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout in November or around New Year's Day when people are making New Year's resolutions.
(See programs and promotions section for more information.)

Developing and rolling out a clear communications plan that will encourage and support your employees in their effort to quit is critical for success.

Questions to ask when drafting and implementing your tobacco-free workforce policies:

- Is the company willing to support employees with resources (reimbursement for medication, smoking cessation counseling) to help them quit?
- Will the company support workers who choose not to quit?
- What policy will be most beneficial to the organization?
- What policy will both management and employees support? (Don't make assumptions, do surveys, focus groups or informal information-gathering sessions)
- How are current tobacco-free policies perceived? Is there a written policy for your company?
- What support programs and benefits already exist to help smokers and their families quit? What new programs and benefits will be added?
- Does the company have an employee and management communications and training strategy for implementing and managing new tobacco-free policies?
- Has legal counsel reviewed the policy and the implementation/communications plan? (Legal counsel should review draft policy to make sure it is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act)*

*These questions are adapted from the Employer's Smoking Cessation Guide, Practical Approaches to a Costly Workplace Problem, Second Edition, a resource developed by Professional Assisted Cessation Therapy (PACT).

What would a workplace tobacco-free policy cover?

1. The purpose of the policy
2. A link between the tobacco-free policy and the company's overall mission and workforce/human resource management strategy
3. Where smoking is prohibited
4. Where smoking is permitted (outside the building or on the grounds, if allowed)
5. Enforcement methods and consequences of non-compliance
6. Support available for smokers who want to quit, including counseling, health plan coverage
7. Contact person who can answer questions on the new policy (name, telephone number, email)

8. Effective date*

This sample outlining the content of a tobacco-free policy is a starting place. As you draft your company's policy you may need to modify the content to reflect your organization's needs.

Making Your Workplace Smoke-Free: A Decision Maker's Guide is a model smoke-free policy developed by the Centers for Disease Control. It is available at:
www.cdc.gov/tobacco/research_data/environmental/etsguide.htm

Step 6: Develop an internal and external Communications Plan.
Once the new policy has been written and reviewed by decision makers and legal counsel, it's time to think about how to inform employees and others about the policy change.

- One level of internal communications should be directed toward managers and supervisors to help them understand their responsibilities for implementing and enforcing the new tobacco-free policies. Meetings and training can prepare them for their role and help them anticipate potential problems or questions about the new tobacco-free policy. (See FAQ's section)

- Another level of internal communications should address the employees. They need to understand what the new policy is and how it affects them. A broad communications strategy including employee meetings can begin the educational process.

  Other elements of a comprehensive Employee Communications Plan include:
  (1.) An intranet component, including emails and other e-communications like electronic newsletter articles can get the information out.
  (2.) Signs, posters, banners can be posted.
  (3.) Collateral like flyers and pay stub messages can be utilized.
  (4.) Don't forget to use the services of your EAP to publicize and explain the new policy and the benefits and support that the company is offering tobacco users to help them quit.

- An external communications plan should be developed to inform any people outside of your company who will be impacted by your new policies. This includes current customers or clients, unions (if it applies) and the community at large. For example, if you are extending your tobacco-free policy to include your entire campus, vendors and visitors need to know. This policy change also offers your company the PR opportunity to show your commitment to your workers' health and the company's commitment to being a good corporate citizen.

Remember, no matter whom the communication targets; managers and supervisors, employees, clients, customers, unions or the community, the core message is that tobacco-free does not mean anti-smoker. The new policies are designed to help tobacco users quit and stay healthy. A tobacco-free workplace and cessation support offered by the company are incentives that can help those who are ready to quit.

How do you enforce tobacco-free policies?

Employees must comply with the company's stated tobacco-free policy. It's not just a company rule. In Massachusetts, it's the law. No smoking is allowed inside the building of any company with one or more employees. When changing or expanding your tobacco-free policies, make sure that you communicate clearly what the consequences are for not adhering to the policy in your employee handbook. Remember not to demonize the tobacco user. The good news is that research shows that companies don't have to use enforcement procedures too often because most policies are self-enforcing and compliance is high.[19] That's because most managers and employees understand the benefits of the tobacco-free policy and support it. A clear communications strategy, preparation and support are the key.

**Component #3
How Workplace Cessation Programs Help Your Workers Quit**

By covering comprehensive cessation benefits like medications and counseling through your health plan and initiating a clear tobacco-free policy, your company can establish the framework for a tobacco-free workplace. But how does a company encourage workers who are ready to quit take the steps to break their tobacco dependence? Offering employees programs and support while they are quitting can make the difference.

One reason cessation programs work well in the work environment is that you have a relatively "captive audience". That makes it an ideal place to help people adopt strategies for healthy living. By integrating tobacco cessation programs with opportunities to learn about exercise, weight management, good nutrition and stress management, your company can create a workplace where behavior can change and healthy lifestyles are supported. By promoting health-oriented programs, everybody benefits; and those trying to quit tobacco are better equipped to reach their goal.

What are some cessation program options for companies large or small?

Just like businesses and organizations, workplace cessation programs come in all sizes and can fit any budget. Many cost the employer little or nothing to put into action. Support resources range from cost effective use of existing personnel, like training staff to lead cessation groups, to free resources on the internet like telephone counseling and self-help information.

Here are some ideas that can help you develop your Cessation Support Program: *

1. **Smoking Cessation Brochures and Self-Help Materials** Provide free brochures and other self-help tools, like audio materials or videos to help guide and support your employees through the quitting process.

2. **Employee Newsletter and Intranet Communications** Use your internal employee communications to educate staff about cessation benefits available through their health plan. You can alert your workers to upcoming cessation meetings and offer support like inspirational articles about staff members that are now tobacco-free. If your company uses social media **internally**, this is another way to reach out to those trying to quit. Cessation messages to post include FAQs or "The Quit Tip of the Day." If your company uses **external** social media to communicate with

customers, clients or the community, announcing your tobacco-free initiative is good publicity.

3. **Free Telephone Based Counseling** Massachusetts' employers can direct employees to the **Helpline (1-800-Quit-Now; 1-800-784-8669)**

   TTY: 1-800-833-1477   Spanish: 1-800-833-5256) that is part of the Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program. This is a confidential counseling support resource. Your health plan may also have a telephone based counseling benefit.

4. **Free Online Smoking Cessation Counseling and Information**

   Check out these online resources to see if they complement your company's cessation program.

- MakeSmokingHistory.org: Sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health offers resources, support, and encouragement to quit.

- Smokefree.gov: An online resource that allows tobacco users to choose the type of help that best fits their needs. The website was created by the Tobacco Control Research Branch of the National Cancer Institute.

- American Lung Association *Freedom From Smoking Online* This program is designed to help adults quit tobacco use. It can be accessed 24 hours a day 7 days a week for continuous support. http://www.lung.org/stop-smoking/how-to-quit/freedom-from-smoking/resources.html

5. **Health Risk Appraisal (HRA)** Conduct an HRA as part of your company's wellness/cessation initiative. HRAs are written health questionnaires that often include physical tests like measuring blood pressure. HRAs give employees an idea of their overall health, and educate them on how to improve their lifestyle and reduce health risks. Tobacco cessation is a critical part of virtually all HRAs. This information is confidential and no names are attached to the results. HRAs can also help the employer develop a profile of the percentage of workers that use tobacco.

6. **Train Your Onsite Wellness Team** If you have medical personnel on staff including physicians, occupational health nurses, health promotion and fitness staff, offer them training in tobacco cessation counseling so that they can work onsite with those who want to quit. Offering counseling at work makes it easier for workers to fit it into their busy schedules, so they may be more apt to attend sessions.

   Many employers have already purchased a block of training sessions with their EAP (Employer Assistance Program) contract. Check with your EAP to see if they provide tobacco cessation counseling or training sessions.

7. **Develop an Incentive Program** To encourage attendance in workplace cessation groups and programs, consider offering an incentive for participating. You could charge a small fee for cessation activities that the employee could earn back after 6 months or a year of staying quit. Keep in mind that very low or no co-pays are the best way to encourage people to quit tobacco use.[20] Prizes, certificates of achievement and recognition by co-workers, like a celebration coffee break or lunch, can also be effective. Remember, whatever incentive program you create, it must fit the culture of your company.

8. **Onsite Support Group** Your company could sponsor a group like Nicotine Anonymous for those trying to quit and recent quitters. It is a 12-step program based on the Alcoholics Anonymous model. For more information on how to start an NA group at your company go to: http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org

9. **One-session seminar for Those "Almost Ready" to Quit** Host a lunch especially for those employees who are thinking about quitting but haven't committed yet. Have an employee who has successfully quit tobacco talk about his or her experiences while quitting and how life has changed now that he or she is tobacco-free.

10. **Special Quitting Events** Sponsor company events that focus on health and tobacco cessation. Consider health fairs, New Year's Resolution Events, or national events like The Great American Smokeout, sponsored by the American Cancer Society each year on a designated day in November. For information and support material go to: http://www.cancer.org/healthy/stayawayfromtobacco/greatamericansmokeout/index

11. **Guest Speakers** Invite a series of speakers to talk to your employees who are in the process of quitting tobacco. They can be professionals, like doctors or other hospital personnel who have seen the results of tobacco use in their daily practice and can advocate strongly for quitting. Recent quitters can speak about quit attempts and how they personally keep their resolve to stay quit. Be sure to check out these people and make sure they are confident about their message and have some experience speaking to groups.

12. **Recommend Cessation Websites** Have your counselors and support group leaders review cessation sites available online. Come up with a list of helpful sites and publish it in the online newsletter for employees and consider sending it out as an email blitz to all employees.

*These ideas are adapted from the Employer's Smoking Cessation Guide, Practical Approaches to a Costly Workplace Problem, Second Edition, a resource developed by Professional Assisted Cessation Therapy (PACT).

How do you evaluate the success of your tobacco-free initiative? What do you assess and when?

Evaluating your tobacco cessation efforts helps you track the effectiveness of your program and measures to what degree your objectives are being met. Getting feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of your plan is critical in managing your healthcare costs as well as maintaining and improving support for your employees.

Many companies plan both a short-term assessment (after 1 to 3 months) and long-term assessments (after 1 to 3 years). The first step is to gather information through feedback sessions with supervisors, management and employees. Or, if you used a survey, you could conduct a brief follow-up survey to measure the outcomes to-date.

In the Short Term you will want to find out the answers to these questions:

- Are employees and visitors complying with the policy?
- Are employees aware of the support available?
- Are employees using the tobacco cessation support your company is providing?
- Are they satisfied with the program?
- Are supervisors encountering any problems?

On the basis of your responses, you may decide to modify programs or support. Make changes at this time only if you have significant concerns.

In the Long Term you will want to find out the answers to these questions:

- Is there a change in employee tobacco use rates?
- Is there a reduction in absenteeism?
- Is there a reduction in healthcare costs?
- Is there an improvement in productivity?
- Is there an improvement in employee attitude toward health?

Information you gather from this later assessment can help you:
- Identify areas for modification in your cessation program
- Supply information to employees and management on what has changed since the cessation policy and programs were put in place
- Provide a structure for the evolution of your cessation program
- Justify any changes based on data collected from assessment*

A Case Study
How UMass Medical School and UMass Memorial Medical Center Went Tobacco-Free

Background: In May of 2008 UMass Medical School (UMMS) and UMass Memorial Medical Center joined the growing number of healthcare organizations that are now tobacco-free. This initiative eliminated the use of all tobacco products inside school and medical center buildings as well as outside on the properties, including parking facilities and cars. The new policy was in response to the well-documented health risks of tobacco use and secondhand smoke. By adopting this initiative and supporting it with comprehensive cessation programs, UMMS and UMass Memorial Medical Center's goal was to create a healthier environment for thousands of employees, students, patients and visitors and help employees and those they serve quit tobacco use.

Policy Development: Creating the tobacco-free policy for these two health organizations was more complex than for other workplaces. The cessation support programs at most companies cover employees and sometimes, family members. But in this case the support programs needed to work for employees, students and for patients. This included inpatients that are receiving care for other health issues and outpatients returning to the hospital for continuing care. Designing the tobacco-free policy and planning a cessation program of support services for employee, students and patients took about a year.

The Team: Greg Seward, Director, Tobacco-Free Initiative, was the lead on the project. As a certified counselor and addiction specialist, he was a perfect fit. In the development phase, he chose a team of nearly two-dozen with representatives from various parts of the organization including medical school and medical center physicians, addictions counselors, human resources and marketing. He hired a part-time project manager and social worker. Each team member contributed his or her expertise to the process. HR, for example, did all the research on health insurance plans and the cessation benefits they offered. Getting input from departments throughout the organization was critical in making informed decisions about policy development, communication and delivery of cessation services.

Program Delivery: Departments at the medical school and medical centers worked together to communicate the tobacco-free policy and deliver the support programs. Marketing used internal email to let employees know about the new policy and to encourage tobacco users to take advantage of the cessation options available. They created screen savers to generate further awareness about the initiative and how to get help to quit. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) sent out weekly emails advertising free meetings and cessation services. These services are confidential and include counseling, education and

support. Physicians, other medical staff and counselors advised patients about cessation programs available to them at the affiliated hospitals and medical centers.

Coverage and Services Provided: HR approved a series of health insurance plans that included free counseling with tobacco cessation experts in a group setting or by telephone. These plans also included access to affordable NRT (nicotine replacement therapy) medications. Initially, Employee Health Services gave out free NRT onsite and would reimburse copayments. Employees also received counseling and support in the workplace.
Low or no-cost nicotine replacement therapy and weekly group and individual counseling was offered to students, patients and visitors to help them quit tobacco.

Measuring Success: Moving to a 100% smoke and tobacco-free environment takes many hours of planning, implementing and monitoring. At various check points in the process UMMC and UMass Medical School asked these questions: Is it working? Are we communicating our policy clearly? What could we do better? How can we encourage more people to take advantage of our cessation programs? Have we made a difference in the health and lifestyle of our staff students, patients and visitors? Since 2008 when the tobacco-free Initiative began at UMMC and UMass Medical Center, it is reported that each year several thousand employees and patients are using the cessation programs and services to help them quit tobacco.

Lessons Learned:

Lesson 1: The Director of the Tobacco-Free Initiative, Greg Seward said, "To be successful you need the support of management, colleagues and stakeholders." He had the full support of senior leadership. Because this was a healthcare setting, his colleagues were in the unique position of understanding the issues surrounding tobacco addiction and the problems of quitting. They were instrumental in planning and participating in support programs including counseling.

Lesson 2: Get a good team together. Don't expect staff to do their normal jobs and manage the cessation program component, too. In a large organization or company you may have to create new positions to monitor and manage the cessation policy and support programs.

Lesson 3: Make it easy to access NRT medications. At first, Employee Health Services gave out NRT free onsite and would reimburse copayment. Now staff and patients must fill a prescription. The Director of the Tobacco-Free Initiative believes that this extra step makes it harder for people to participate and may lower the success rate of the cessation program.*

FAQs For Employers and Administrators

Will there be a reduction in healthcare costs at the end of year one?
Clarify the difficulties in promising savings in healthcare costs within one year. If you accurately identify who is using tobacco before the new policy takes effect, a careful assessment of changes in tobacco use among employees at the end of year one can be used to calculate the potential cost benefit of the tobacco-free policy.

Should employees be allowed to take time away from their job to participate in tobacco cessation activities?
You can plan these programs at times that are not part of the workday but are convenient for employees (e.g., before work, during lunch, or after work). Point out that over the long-term, time off to attend tobacco cessation programs will add up to less time than employees take to smoke.

Will a tobacco-free policy result in the loss of smoking employees?
Very few employees leave companies because of implementation of smoke- free policies: 3.5% of an extensive small business sample and 2% of another sample said employees left due to a tobacco-free policy.[21]

Will a tobacco-free policy be too difficult to enforce?
Enforcement procedures are almost never needed, because most policies are self-enforcing and compliance is very high. Compliance is high because both management and employees usually support the smoke-free policy.[22]

Will a 100% tobacco-free policy alienate clients?
In most cases, clearly posted signs are enough to alert clients to your tobacco-free policy. Some companies hand out a small card explaining the tobacco-free policy.

Won't a tobacco-free policy cost too much time and money to implement?
Experience and limited survey data have demonstrated that developing and implementing a tobacco-free policy does not need to be expensive or time-consuming. Costs and time can be saved with a well-thought-out implementation.

FAQS adapted from Making Your Workplace Smokefree: A Decision Maker's Guide, issued by U.S. Department Of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health, Wellness Councils of America and the American Cancer Society.

FAQs For Employees

Here are some questions employees asked when the Executive Offices of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) in Massachusetts adopted a tobacco-free campus policy. They reflect some universal questions and concerns employees have when their workplace becomes Tobacco-Free. We have included these questions as a guide. You will need to tailor your responses to fit your company's policy.

1. Why is our company going 100% tobacco-free?
2. What does the policy say?
3. Can I still smoke in the parking lot?
4. Can I still keep my cigarettes or other tobacco product with me while I work?
5. Isn't using tobacco a personal choice?
6. When does the policy go into effect?
7. How will clients and visitors be notified of the new policy?
8. What if I see someone smoking on company property? Who do I tell?
9. I'm a tobacco user and I'm thinking about quitting. What resources are available to me?
10. Is secondhand smoke really a problem?
11. I'm a non-smoker and I don't think it's fair that smokers will have to walk farther to get their cigarette. How is management going to deal with this?
12. What about safety if smokers are being required to leave grounds during breaks?

Additional Employer Resources

National Business Group on Health: Tobacco: The Business of Quitting (An Employer's Website for Smoking Cessation)
http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/tobacco/

Action to Quit: Engaging Employers in Tobacco Control
http://www.actiontoquit.org/engaging_employers

Partnership for Prevention: Investing in Health Workplace Guide
http://www.prevent.org/Worksite-Health/Investing-in-Health-Workplace-Guide.aspx

Make it Your Business: Strategies for a Tobacco-Free Workplace in Wisconsin
http://www.tobwis.org/_Media/Content/CTRIEmployerToolkit.pdf

AHIP: Making the Case for Smoking Cessation ROI Calculator
http://www.businesscaseroi.org/roi/apps/calculator/calcentry.aspx

Leif Associates, Inc.: Report: The Business Case for Coverage of Tobacco Cessation http://www.ctri.wisc.edu/Employers/Actuarial.Analysis.pdf

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